We've got 76 comments so far! :)

Posted on 13 September 2011

When we launched this blog, we weren't sure what the reaction was going to be - whether we'd be overwhelmed by comments or whether there would be crickets chirping. We've been getting very good quality comments from you and we'd like to thank you for them.

We thought it would be a good idea to give you a summary of some of the themes people have talked about so far in the blog.

Please keep in mind, this is not a final analysis of your comments, just a quick summary - a rough draft. A more detailed analysis of the comments will be available when we complete our final report on the consultation.

Several broad themes in the comments so far:

- **Sustainability** - in how we develop and grow our economy
- **Quality education** - having access to quality public education with well trained teachers
- **Equity** - equitable (fairer) distribution of income and wealth
- **Stable population**
- **Social connectedness** - increasing social capital
- **Care for our environment**
- **Access to services** - access to public transport, public housing and adequate social security
- **Health** - focus on mental health

What do you think about these? Are there other areas missing? What else matters to you?

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Comments

#1 MJ

16/09/2011 1:19:18 PM We've got 76 comments so far! :)

I like this list. Having attempted to write down things that i think Australia should strive for, I find that many of the things i wrote are essentially covered by what have been touched on above. Here's my thinking:

The underlying principle I would think needs to be: Progress is a place where we don't fear to dream big as a nation and become too terrified by risk and the possibility or failure.

And specifically, I think progress for Australia would possess some of the following things. An Australia that: strives for excellence in the arts; leads the world in economic reform; that is open, inclusive and fosters positive social relationships between its fellow citizens; that retains a healthy sense of humour and larrikin quality; that minimises and limits the role of bureaucracy where safely possible and where feasible; that ensures the natural environment for posterity; that where feasible and able, maintain and improve the living conditions of Australians (especially the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous); that never forgets its history both good and bad; and perhaps most importantly (and underpinning all of these things), adequately educates and equips its citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate an increasingly mobile and complex society.

#2 KS

20/09/2011 11:55:40 AM We've got 76 comments so far! :)

What about freedom? About feeling that living day-to-day is not 'over-governed' that the liberation in other Western developed countries is enjoyed here? That we can ride without

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a bike helmet for 5 minutes? That I can park my car safely in a city street without spending 10 minutes trying to decipher a parking sign. That I can walk down the street without having to think of the ramifications if I: say something that might offend, trip on a footpath without the thought of suing someone. Each and every single aspect of what we do is a fineable offence. Quite simply- we are a nanny state and it makes me want to relocate overseas.

#3 Amy Fairall
21/09/2011 9:06:57 AM Equity

The firmly agree with the themes which have been identified in the above list. In my view, we should be giving thought to complex issues we face today and/or anticipate in the future. The above list appears to address these concerns well.

However, the concept of equity should perhaps be explored more broadly than income and wealth. What about equity of opportunity? I recognise this may cross over other themes, such as quality education and access to services, but I think we need to explore the possibility of measuring equity in terms of equality. For instance; policy related to, and attitudes towards, the diverse groups which make up our ever evolving culture.

A second idea, which may also be worth consideration relates to work/life balance. It may fall into another theme, such as health, but we often hear comparisons made to other countries and reports of a lack of balance for many Australians.

What do others think of these suggestions? Are they measurable?

#4 Serhat (MAP team)
21/09/2011 10:04:55 AM Equity

Hi Amy. Thanks for the comment. You raise some interesting points. Equity has been one theme that has been mentioned frequently by people while we've been carrying out this consultation. And like you said, people have been talking about equity broader than just income and wealth. Equity is one theme that can span across several areas. Another theme that is broader than one area is sustainability - not just in terms of the environment but also the economy as well for example.

Work/life balance has also been one theme that is frequently mentioned by people. We don't want people to worry about how measure things at this stage of the consultation. Right now we're trying to understand what matters to Australians because before we can measure something, we have to know what it is we want to measure exactly. Even if there is no way to measure something currently, they may be in the future.

#5 VJ
21/09/2011 5:19:45 PM We've got 76 comments so far! :)

How about 'people capital' and corporate responsibility within this area. We seem to increasingly measured as widgets in a machine. Business does not seem interested in investing in real training and development of their staff. Workers just have to come straight in as the perfect package. With the increasing casualisation (freelance and contract roles) within the workforce this can only be getting worse. I think there needs to be a refocus away from just costs which would assist the young and older workers continue to participate. This crosses over various areas such as work/life balance and population growth.

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